(8a (City) 23

125 Highland St.,
Jan. 21, 1874.

Dear Mr. Cobb:

Accept my thanks for your card of invitation to the inaugural services, and also for a printed copy (in pamphlet form) of your Inaugural Address as Mayor of Boston to the City Council, on the 5th inst. With a single exception, I listened to the delivery of your Address with interest & pleasure, marked as it was by characteristic modesty, intelligence, and good sense, and making various suggestions promotive of the growth and prosperity of the city. Of course, as a teetotaller for nearly half a century, and all that time a pledged advocate of the temperance movement in its most radical phase, you will hardly expect me to approve of your views re-

specting the Prohibitory law. Indeed, I must frankly but kindly say that I entirely dissent from them, whether in regard to the repeal or essential modification of that law, or to its general efficacy, or with reference to the ground assumed for refusing to execute it in "the large cities and towns of the Commonwealth. It has been placed as fairly and intelligently upon the Statute Book by the people of Massachusetts as any ever enacted; and I know of no reason why it should be set at nought by a minority, except on the principle of Southern Secession. Certainly, the contemners of a law may not point to its frequent violation, through their connivance or sanction, for proof that it is a failure. Nothing is wanting to make it thoroughly effective but that obedience on their part which

they factiously withhold, but which as good and law-abiding citizens they are bound to render, unless it is with them a casus conscientiae, which none of them will pretend. I regret that the prohibitory law is not more stringently enforced, as it is in the interest of morality, public order, and the general welfare; but, while it actively excites the hostility of all who sell, or buy, or use intoxicating liquors, it cannot be said to be a dead letter: for in that case they would care nothing for it.

But my object in writing this letter is not to argue this question, but to acknowledge your courteous attentions, which it will give me great pleasure to reciprocate as opportunity may offer. I have no doubt as to the sincerity of your convictions in this matter, and respect you for your straight-

forward utterance of them; and you will accord to me the same liberty of dissent, in the spirit of friendship, and of a kind neighborly intercourse.

Very truly yours,

Wm Lloyd Garrison.

P.S. Do not take the trouble to make any reply to this, as none is requested or needed.

Samuel C. Cobb, Esq.,
Mayor of Boston.